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ACTA APOSTOLICAE SEDIS

COMMENTARIUM OFFICIALE

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ACTA BENEDICTI PP. XVI

LITTERAE APOSTOLICAE MOTU PROPRIO DATAE

Quibus Supremi Tribunalis Signaturae Apostolicae *lex propria* promulgatur.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

Antiqua ordinatione tribunalium *Signaturae papalis gratiae et iustitiae* suppressa, ante centum annos Supremum Signaturae Apostolicae Tribunal restituit, vel melius instituit, Sanctus Decessor Noster Pius PP. X, Constitutione Apostolica scilicet *Sapienti consilio* die XXIX mensis Iunii anni MCMVIII edita, qua Curiae Romanae ordinatio apte recognoscebatur, cuique adnexa erat *Lex propria Sacrae Romanae Rotae et Signaturae Apostolicae*. Idem quoque Summus Pontifex *Regulas servandas in iudiciis apud Supremum Apostolicae Signaturae Tribunal* die VI mensis Martii anni MCMXII confirmare ratasque facere dignatus est; quin immo vim iisdem auctoritatemque *Legis peculiaris* pro Supremo Apostolicae Signaturae Tribunali attribuens, in Actis Apostolicae Sedis referri, promulgari et ab omnibus, ad quos spectaret, stricte in posterum observari iussit.

Competentiae Signaturae Apostolicae ita determinatae a Successore eius Summo Pontifice Benedicto PP. XV, ad instantiam Eminentissimi Michaëlis S.R.E. Cardinalis Lega, Supremi Tribunalis Praefecti, chirographo *Attentis expositis* diei XXVIII mensis Iunii anni MCMXV auctae et dein denuo expositae sunt in *Codice Iuris Canonici*, ab eodem Decessore Nostro paulo postea, id est die XXVII mensis Maii anni MCMXVII, promulgato.

Quae fere immutatae permanserunt usque ad Constitutionem Apostolicam *Regimini Ecclesiae universae*, qua Summus Pontifex Paulus PP. VI,

venerandae memoriae, die XV mensis Augusti anni MCMLXVII novam Romanae Curiae ordinationem ad effectum alacriter adduxit, Sectionem Alteram ad summa eaque principalia fidelium iura aptius tuenda apud Tribunal Signaturae Apostolicae induxit eiusque munus rectae iustitiae administrationi invigilandi ad causas quoque matrimoniales extendit.

Huiusmodi magnae innovationes requirebant ut quam primum *Normae Speciales* redigerentur, quae ab eodem Summo Pontifice iam die XXIII mensis Martii anni MCMLXVIII ad experimentum approbatae sunt, deinceps *Regulas servandas* substituerunt et per quadraginta annos viguerunt in periodo profundae recognitionis legislationis canonicae.

Promulgavit enim Servus Dei Ioannes Paulus PP. II die XXV mensis Ianuarii anni MCMLXXXIII *Codicem Iuris Canonici*, die XXVIII mensis Iunii anni MCMLXXXVIII Constitutionem Apostolicam *Pastor bonus* et die XVIII mensis Octobris anni MCMXC *Codicem Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*.

Quibus omnibus feliciter completis, tandem aliquando aggrediendum erat opus redigendi *Legem propriam*, quae iuxta art. 125 Constitutionis Apostolicae *Pastor bonus* Supremum regeret Tribunal Signaturae Apostolicae. Paratum schema *Legis propriae* Eminentissimi ac Excellentissimi huius Supremi Tribunalis Patres, moderante Eminentissimo Augustino S.R.E. Cardinale Vallini eiusdem Dicasterii Praefecto, in Congregatione Plenaria dierum XV et XVI mensis Novembris anni MMVII sedulo subiecerunt examini atque emendatum normarum textum Nobis deferendum statuerunt ut Apostolica sanctione ditaretur.

En recognita

Lex propria Supremi Tribunalis Signaturae Apostolicae.

TITULUS I

DE CONSTITUTIONE ET MUNERIBUS

Caput I.

De constitutione Signaturae Apostolicae

Art. 1. § 1. Supremum Tribunal Signaturae Apostolicae constat coetu Patrum Cardinalium et Episcoporum, qui a Summo Pontifice nominantur; ei praeest Cardinalis Praefectus, ab Eodem Summo Pontifice delectus.

§ 2. Coetui Membrorum adscribi quoque possunt aliqui clerici, integrae famae, in iure canonico doctores atque eximia doctrina canonica praediti.

§ 3. Supremum Tribunal, nisi aliud caveatur, causas cognoscit per collegia, salva facultate Praefecti eas deferendi ad Signaturam Plenam.

§ 4. Sancta Sede vacante, Praefectus et Membra a munere cessant.

Art. 2. § 1. Praefecto auxilio est Secretarius in Signaturae Apostolicae negotiis personisque moderandis.

§ 2. Sancta Sede vacante, Secretarius ordinario moderamini Signaturae Apostolicae prospicit, negotia tantum ordinaria gerens; ipse vero indiget confirmatione Summi Pontificis, intra tres ab Eius electione menses.

Art. 3. In Dicasterio operam praestant Promotor iustitiae, Defensor vinculi, Promotores iustitiae Substituti et Praepositus Cancellariae, necnon congruus Officialium et Adiutorum numerus. Eidem adsunt, tamquam consultores, Referendarii.

Art. 4. Secretarius, Promotor iustitiae, Defensor vinculi, Promotores iustitiae Substituti, utpote Administri maiores, necnon Referendarii a Summo Pontifice nominantur. Officiales et Adiutores assumuntur ad normam Ordinationis generalis Romanae Curiae.

Caput II.

De singulis muneribus

Art. 5. § 1. Praefectus Signaturam Apostolicam moderatur, eam dirigit eiusdemque personam gerit.

§ 2. Ipsius potissimum est:

1° Collegium Iudicum constituere vel Signaturam Plenam convocare, designare Ponentem et Iudicum Sessionibus praeesse;

2° Congressui praeesse et in eo decisiones ferre;

3° petitas gratias concedere et decreta decisoria extra Congressum ferre.

Art. 6. § 1. Secretarius, sub auctoritate Praefecti, omnia ad instructionem et expeditionem negotiorum spectantia peragenda curat.

§ 2. Ipsius potissimum est:

1° instantias receptas aliasque quaestiones examinandas committere;

2º recursus aliasve instantias, si casus ferat, in limine reicere;

3º munus Auditoris explere;

4º Iudicum conventui adstare ad causam illustrandam, salvo art. 47, § 2;

5º curare ut epistolae et decreta a Praefecto vel a seipso subsignanda rite redigantur;

6º bona administrare.

§ 3. Vices Praefecti absentis vel impediti gerit, salvis casibus ipsi Praefecto reservatis.

Art. 7. § 1. Promotor iustitiae, quem saltem duo Substituti adiuvant, intervenit in causis et quaestionibus rectam administrationem iustitiae spectantibus.

§ 2. In causis iudicialibus et contentiosis administrativis dimicat super partes pro iustitia et veritate; in causis vero poenalibus et disciplinaribus, mandante Praefecto, promovet actionem.

§ 3. Vices Secretarii impediti vel absentis agit.

§ 4. A munere cessat septuagesimo quinto aetatis expleto anno.

Art. 8. § 1. Defensor vinculi intervenire debet in causis et negotiis in quibus agitur de nullitate sacrae ordinationis aut de nullitate vel solutione matrimonii; praeter casus in quibus ex natura rei eius interventus evidenter requiritur, Secretarii est decernere utrum intervenire debeat, necne, firmo art. 22.

§ 2. Ipse officio tenetur proponendi et exponendi omnia quae rationabiliter adduci possint adversus nullitatem vel solutionem.

§ 3. A munere cessat septuagesimo quinto aetatis expleto anno.

Art. 9. Ad munus promotoris iustitiae vel defensoris vinculi in casu exercendum, Secretarius iusta de causa deputare potest, praeter Administros maiores, Referendarios aliosve peritos.

Art. 10. § 1. Referendarii, salvo art. 9, munus obtinent consultorum, qui votum pro scientia et experientia super proposita quaestione proferunt.

§ 2. Referendarii ornari debent laurea doctorali in iure canonico necnon honestate vitae, prudentia et iuris peritia enitere.

Art. 11. § 1. Praepositus Cancellariae eandem, sub ductu Secretarii, moderatur.

§ 2. Ipsius potissimum est acta nomine Cancellariae expedienda signare, sigillum Signaturae Apostolicae custodire, summarium causarum conficere et mandata solutionis vel exactionis parare.

§ 3. Adiuvantibus Notariis et addictis, ipse praesertim quoque prospicit ut acta omnia, quae ad Signaturam perveniunt, in protocollo referantur; progressus causarum adnotetur; epistolae, decreta et rescripta, iuxta mandata recepta, rite conficiantur et expediantur; acta in tabulario rite custodiantur atque in bibliotheca adsint necessaria consultationis opera.

§ 4. Ipse curat ut omnes decisiones colligantur, quarum aliquae, quotannis a Praefecto in Congressu selectae, ope Supremi Tribunalis publici iuris fiunt.

Art. 12. §1. Praepositus Cancellariae ceterique notarii publicam fidem faciunt de actis coram se gestis ac cum autographo exemplarium testantur fidelitatem.

§ 2. Secretarius addictis Cancellariae ad actum munus notarii concedere valet.

Art. 13. § 1. Notarii et addicti Cancellariae, pro peculiaribus muneribus ipsis concreditis, epistolas, decreta et rescripta exscribunt ac de statu quaestionum pertractandarum referunt.

§ 2. Notariorum senior nominatione vices gerit Praepositi Cancellariae ad tempus absentis vel impediti.

Art. 14. Apparitores Signaturae munere quoque cursoris funguntur.

Art. 15. Administri maiores, Officiales et Adiutores, in Indice munerum (*Tabella organica*) Signaturae Apostolicae recensiti, munera sibi assignata sub ductu Superiorum sedulo adimpleant.

Caput III.
De patronis

Art. 16. § 1. Partes stare in iudicio possunt solummodo per patronum, seu procuratorem-advocatum.

§ 2. Quod si pars recurrens, de re certior facta, intra praestitutum terminum non providerit nec idoneam excusationem attulerit vel gratuitum patrocinium obtinuerit, Secretarius causam declarat peremptam.

Art. 17. § 1. Causarum patrocinium suscipere possunt Advocati apud Curiam Romanam.

§ 2. Admittuntur praeterea in causis iudicialibus, de quibus in art. 33, necnon in causis disciplinaribus, de quibus in art. 35, n. 1, Advocati Rotae Romanae.

§ 3. In causis contentiosis administrativis, de quibus in art. 34, Praefectus ad casum admittere valet Advocatos Rotae Romanae, dummodo in re vere peritos, vel, si casus ferat, alium vere peritum laurea doctorali in iure canonico ornatum.

§ 4. Advocati apud Curiam Romanam initio suscepti muneris, ceteri initio susceptae causae contentiosae administrativae, iusiurandum praestare tenentur de secreto servando deque munere rite et fideliter explendo.

Art. 18. § 1. Patronus pro munere suo tenetur tueri iura partis atque secretum officii servare.

§ 2. Ipsius est partem repraesentare, libellos aut recursus exhibere, eam de statu causae certiorem facere, notificationes pro ea recipere atque eam defendere.

Art. 19. § 1. Patroni iure ad congruum honorarium gaudent.

§ 2. Si quaestio oriatur de emolumento, Secretarius ad instantiam partis vel ex officio, auditis iis quorum interest, rem definit, salvo recursu ad Praefectum, firmis artt. 35, n. 1, et 113.

Art. 20. Patroni de mandato Secretarii gratuitum patrocinium praebere tenentur, salva aequa compensatione, solvenda, si casus ferat, ex arca Supremi Tribunalis.

Caput IV.

De disciplina servanda

Art. 21. Collegium Iudicum quinque membris constituitur, nisi Praefectus in Congressu decernat recursum adversus decretum reiectionis in Congressu latum, quoties datur, a Collegio trium Iudicum iudicandum esse.

Art. 22. § 1. In Congressu Praefectus decisionem fert, intervenientibus Secretario, Promotore iustitiae, Defensore vinculi et Promotoribus iustitiae Substitutis necnon aliis forte ad munus promotoris iustitiae vel defensoris vinculi in causis pertractandis deputatis, adstante Praeposito Cancellariae;

ad eum invitari possunt, de iudicio Praefecti, Referendarii quorum praesentia utilis censetur.

§ 2. In casu urgenti sufficit ut adsint, praeter Praefectum et Secretarium eiusve vices agentem, duo alii ex convocatis.

Art. 23. § 1. Praefectus, Iudices, Secretarius, Promotor iustitiae et Defensor vinculi abstinere debent a causa pertractanda in casibus de quibus in cann. 1448, § 1 Codicis Iuris Canonici et 1106, § 1 Codicis Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium.

§ 2. Si Praefectus a causa abstinet, eius munera in causa exercenda sunt a Secretario usque ad Iudicum Sessionem, cui vero praeest Cardinalis Iudex ordinis et promotionis prior.

§ 3. Si Secretarius a causa abstinet, eius munera in causa exercenda sunt a Promotore iustitiae.

Art. 24. § 1. His in casibus, nisi ipsi abstineant, pars potest eos recusare.

§ 2. Si Praefectus aliusve Cardinalis recusetur, pars recusans, Signatura certiore facta, rem Summo Pontifici deferat; reliquis in casibus de recusatione videt Praefectus.

Art. 25. Professionem fidei necnon iusiurandum de secreto servando deque munere rite et fideliter obeundo omnes, initio suscepti officii, coram Praefecto praestare tenentur, praesente Notario.

Art. 26. § 1. Patroni id petentes obtinere possunt actorum exemplar, de licentia Secretarii auditoque Promotore iustitiae; ipsi autem gravi obligatione tenentur ne actorum quorumlibet exemplar, ex toto vel ex parte, aliis, partibus haud exceptis, tradatur.

§ 2. Publicatio seu intimatio decisionum, ad omnes iuris effectus, fit tradendo vel transmittendo earum exemplar Patronis.

Art. 27. § 1. Termini actis processualibus statuti sunt ordinatorii, nisi iure peremptorii sint vel expresse declarentur.

§ 2. Ius tamen est Praefecto necnon Secretario terminos peremptorios constituere, si id requiratur pro casu expedite solvendo.

§ 3. Termini in hac lege statuti intelleguntur utiles.

Art. 28. § 1. Nisi aliud caveatur, adversus Secretarii decretum non mere ordinatorium datur recursus motivis suffultus ad Praefectum intra terminum peremptorium decem dierum proponendus.

§ 2. Quoties adversus decretum Congressus datur facultas recurrendi ad Collegium, recursus motivis suffultus exhibendus est intra terminum peremptorium decem dierum.

Art. 29. § 1. Signaturam Apostolicam fas est adire, praeterquam officiali Latino sermone, etiam sermonibus hodie latius cognitis. Si vero quis eam alia lingua adeat, Secretarius exigere potest ut ipse lingua latius cognita utatur.

§ 2. Ceterae instantiae, defensiones et vota exhibenda sunt lingua Latina.

Caput V.

De expensis et de gratuito patrocinio

Art. 30. § 1. Congressus normas statuit de cautionibus deponendis, expensis iudicialibus, honorariis et taxis pro rescriptis.

§ 2. Secretarius potest, iusta de causa, singulis in casibus aliud statuere de cautione deponenda vel taxa solvenda.

§ 3. In decisionibus statuitur circa expensas, honoraria et, si casus ferat, damna reficienda.

Art. 31. § 1. Qui gratuitum patrocinium petit, praesumpto bono iure gaudere debet ad causam agendam atque probationes exhibere, quibus eius oeconomica condicio appareat.

§ 2. Praefectus, auditis Secretario et Promotore iustitiae, decreto beneficium, vel ex toto vel ex parte, concedit aut denegat.

§ 3. A Praefecti decreto non datur appellatio, sed pars intra quindecim dies ad eundem Praefectum recurrere potest.

§ 4. Concesso gratuito patrocinio, Secretarius Patronum ex officio nominat.

TITULUS II

DE COMPETENTIA SIGNATURAE APOSTOLICAE

Art. 32. Dicasterium, praeter munus, quod exercet, Supremi Tribunalis, consulit ut iustitia in Ecclesia recte administretur.

Art. 33. Signatura Apostolica cognoscit:

1° querelas nullitatis contra decisiones definitivas vel vim sententiae definitivae habentes Rotae Romanae;

2° petitiones restitutionis in integrum contra decisiones Rotae Romanae;

3° recursus, in causis de statu personarum, adversus denegatum a Rota Romana novum causae examen;

4° exceptiones suspicionis aliasque causas contra Iudices Rotae Romanae propter acta in exercitio ipsorum muneris;

5° conflictus competentiae inter tribunalia, quae non subiciuntur eidem tribunali appellationis, nisi aliud iure provisum sit.

Art. 34. § 1. Signatura Apostolica cognoscit de recursibus, intra terminum peremptorium sexaginta dierum utilium interpositis, adversus actus administrativos singulares sive a Dicasteriis Curiae Romanae latos sive ab ipsis probatos, quoties contendatur num actus impugnatus legem aliquam in decernendo vel in procedendo violaverit.

§ 2. In his casibus, praeter iudicium de illegitimitate, cognoscere etiam potest, si recurrens id postulet, de reparatione damnorum actu illegitimo illatorum.

§ 3. Cognoscit etiam de aliis controversiis administrativis, quae a Romano Pontifice vel a Romanae Curiae Dicasteriis ipsi deferantur necnon de conflictibus competentiae inter eadem Dicasteria.

Art. 35. Signaturae Apostolicae quoque est rectae administrationi iustitiae invigilare, et speciatim:

1° in ministros tribunalium, advocatos vel procuratores, si opus sit, animadvertere;

2° videre de petitionibus Sedi Apostolicae porrectis ad obtinendam causae commissionem apud Rotam Romanam, dispensationem a legibus processua-

libus, Ecclesiis orientalibus haud exclusis, vel aliam gratiam relative ad iustitiam administrandam;

3° tribunalium inferiorum competentiam prorogare;

4° approbationem Tribunalis appellationis Sanctae Sedi reservatam concedere;

5° promovere et approbare erectionem tribunalium interdioecesanorum;

6° cognoscere de iis quae Signaturae Apostolicae per conventiones inter Sanctam Sedem et Civitates tribuuntur.

TITULUS III

DE PROCESSU IUDICIALI

Caput I.

Normae generales

Art. 36. Recursus introducitur per libellum, cui, ubi sententia vel decretum impugnatur, eiusdem exemplar authenticum adnecti debet.

Art. 37. Secretarius omnia acta casum respicientia exquirit.

Art. 38. Secretarius decreto libellum notificandum curat omnibus quorum interest necnon, si iudicio intersit, Defensori vinculi, atque terminum statuit ad Patronum, prouti requiratur et firmo art. 16, eligendum necnon ad scripturas producendas.

Art. 39. § 1. Quo termino elapso, Promotor iustitiae votum pro rei veritate promit.

§ 2. Quod votum, una cum scripturis de quibus in art. 38, Secretarius communicandum curat cum partibus, quae ius habent, si velint, replicandi intra decem dies.

§ 3. Data facultate Defensori vinculi iterum replicandi, novissime Promotori iustitiae intervenire licet.

Art. 40. Praefectus Congressui habendo diem statuit eundemque cum partibus communicari iubet.

Art. 41. § 1. Quibus praehabitis, Congressus recursum admittit vel reicit.

§ 2. Congressus decisiones scripto partibus notificantur.

Art. 42. § 1. Contra reiectionis decretum, nisi aliud iure caveatur, patet recursus ad Collegium Iudicum; de huiusmodi iure recurrens per idem decretum certior fit.

§ 2. Recursus, argumentis suffultus, intra terminum peremptorium decem dierum proponendus est.

§ 3. De recursu interiecto certiores fiant partes, quae iure gaudent intra decem dies suas animadversiones proponendi.

§ 4. Voto Promotoris iustitiae exhibito, recursus quamprimum ad Collegium defertur, cuius decisio nulli iuris remedio obnoxia est.

Art. 43. § 1. Admisso recursu, Secretarius omnes quorum interest ad litis contestationem convocat.

§ 2. Secretario competit, auditis omnibus quorum interest, decreto dubii formulam statuere, causae instructionem ad normam iuris moderari, necnon quaestiones incidentes, si quae sint, expeditissime dirimere.

Art. 44. Instructione expleta, Secretarius, adiuvante Promotore iustitiae et auditis partium Patronis necnon Defensore vinculi, causae summarium conficiendum curat; insuper ad normam artt. 38-39 partium restrictus et Defensoris vinculi animadversiones necnon Promotoris iustitiae votum exquirit atque notificari iubet.

Art. 45. Partium, Defensoris vinculi et Promotoris iustitiae responsionibus exhibitis, conclusum in causa esto.

Art. 46. Peractis iure peragendis, Praefectus causam definiendam ad Collegium defert.

Art. 47. § 1. In Iudicum conventu Iudex Ponens seu Relator contentionem refert et rationes tum pro recursu tum ex adverso perstringit.

§ 2. Dein Iudices, nemine adstante, ex ordine conclusiones cum rationibus tam in iure quam in facto proferunt, quae conclusiones scriptae Ponenti traduntur ad sententiam redigendam; dein autem actis causae adiunguntur secreto servandae.

§ 3. Discussione peracta, Collegium decisionem fert, in qua maior suffragiorum pars convenit.

§ 4. Pars dispositiva a Iudice Ponente seu Relatore scripto redigitur, a singulis Iudicibus subsignatur et statim Secretario traditur.

Art. 48. § 1. Iudex Ponens seu Relator quamprimum textum decisionis exarat.

§ 2. Supremi Tribunalis Praefectus, si casus ferat, statuere potest decisionis rationes in iure et in facto scripto redigi a Promotore iustitiae.

Art. 49. Si Collegium Iudicum ulteriorem instructionem iubeat, Secretarius eam perficit.

Art. 50. Adversus Collegii decisiones, nisi aliud expresse statuatur, non est locus impugnationi.

Caput II.

De querelis nullitatis contra decisiones Rotae Romanae

Art. 51. Querela nullitatis proponi potest non solum adversus sententias definitivas, verum etiam adversus sententias interlocutorias et decreta, a Rota Romana quomodocumque emissa, dummodo, nisi aliud iure caveatur, vim sententiae definitivae habeant.

Art. 52. § 1. Si nomine alterius quis egit sine legitimo mandato, vitium sanatum habetur ob appellationem interpositam ab ipsa parte antequam nullitas opponatur, immo ob quemlibet eiusdem partis actum ante querelam positum, qui par sit ratihabitioni.

§ 2. In casu de quo in § 1, recursus Secretarii decreto in limine reicitur.

Art. 53. § 1. Si querela nullitatis una cum appellatione cumuletur, illa coram Signatura Apostolica, haec coram Rota Romana interponenda est.

§ 2. Decisio querelae decisionem appellationis praecedere debet, nisi Signatura Apostolica aliud decreverit.

Art. 54. Admisso recursu, dubium concordandum est sub formula: An constet de nullitate decisionis Rotae Romanae.

Caput III.

De petitionibus restitutionis in integrum contra decisiones Rotae Romanae

Art. 55. § 1. Petitio restitutionis in integrum sententiae exsecutionem nondum inceptam suspendit.

§ 2. Si tamen ex probabilibus indiciis suspicio sit petitionem factam esse ad moras exsecutioni nectendas, Congressus decernere potest ut sententia

exsecutioni demandetur, assignata tamen restitutionem petenti idonea cautione ut, si restituatur in integrum, indemnis fiat.

Art. 56. Admisso recursu, dubium concordandum est sub formula: An concedenda sit restitutio in integrum.

Art. 57. Concessa restitutione, nisi Summus Pontifex aliud providerit, causa remittitur ad Rotam Romanam ut, iuxta suas normas, de merito iudicet.

Caput IV.

De recursibus adversus denegatum a Rota Romana novum causae examen

Art. 58. In causis de statu personarum, recursus adversus denegatum a Rota Romana novum causae examen intra peremptorium triginta dierum terminum proponi potest.

Art. 59. § 1. Certiore facta altera parte, Secretarius brevem terminum praestituit recurrenti ad petitionis motiva illustranda; dein Defensor vinculi suas animadversiones exarat; ultimus promit Promotor iustitiae votum pro rei veritate.

§ 2. Congressus novam causae propositionem, remoto quolibet iuris remedio, admittit vel reicit.

Art. 60. Decretum a Congressu latum parti recurrenti atque Rotae Romanae Decano notificatur, certiore facta altera parte.

Art. 61. Congressus, pendente recursu coram Signatura Apostolica, videre potest de suspensione exsecutionis sententiae concedenda vel revocanda.

Caput V.

De exceptionibus suspicionis contra Iudices Rotae Romanae

Art. 62. Suspicionis exceptio contra Iudicem Rotae Romanae proponi potest in casibus de quibus in cann. 1448, § 1 et 1624 Codicis Iuris Canonici atque 1106, § 1 et 1305 Codicis Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium.

Art. 63. § 1. Certiore statim facto Iudice recusato, Secretarius terminum praestituit exceptionem proponenti ad argumenta adducta illustranda; dein habitis ad rem partium memorialibus, necnon animadversionibus Defensoris vinculi, si intersit, et voto pro rei veritate Promotoris iustitiae, causa ad Congressum defertur.

§ 2. Iudex recusatus, si ipse postulet vel casus ferat, auditur a Secretario.

Art. 64. Congressus, remoto quolibet iuris remedio, edicit utrum locus sit, necne, recusationi Iudicis.

Art. 65. Decretum a Congressu latum Rotae Romanae Decano quamprimum notificatur.

Caput VI.

De causis contra Iudices Rotae Romanae

Art. 66. § 1. Processus in causis sive poenalibus sive contentiosis contra Iudices Rotae Romanae propter acta in exercitio ipsorum muneris evolvitur, congrua congruis referendo, iuxta artt. 36-49 necnon praescripta iuris codicialis.

§ 2. Pars laesa potest actionem contentiosam ad damna reparanda ex delicto sibi illata in ipso poenali iudicio exercere.

Art. 67. § 1. In iudicio poenali partes actoris gerit Promotor iustitiae.

§ 2. Omnia quae in iudicio poenali promovendo instituendoque Ordinario competunt, Praefectus exercet.

Art. 68. Sententia a Collegio quinque Iudicum fertur.

Art. 69. Parti, quae se gravatam putet, atque Promotori iustitiae suppetunt remedia iuris coram Signatura Apostolica, appellatione in casu haud exclusa.

Caput VII.

De conflictibus competentiae inter Tribunalia

Art. 70. Salva competentia de qua in art. 35, nn. 2-3, Signatura Apostolica, denuntiato competentiae conflictu, primum videt num reapse de conflictu agatur, et quidem ad normam articulorum huius capitis solvendo.

Art. 71. Secretarius, inspectis omnibus conflictus adiunctis, prout casus ferat processus pendentes suspendit.

Art. 72. § 1. Acquisitis actis causae atque partium memorialibus necnon, si casus ferat, auditis Tribunalibus, Defensor vinculi, si in iudicio interveniat, animadversiones et Promotor iustitiae votum pro rei veritate exhibent.

§ 2. Congressus, remoto quolibet iuris remedio, decreto propositum conflictum solvit, statuens, quatenus necessarium, forum competens atque prosecutionis rationem.

TITULUS IV

DE PROCESSU CONTENTIOSO ADMINISTRATIVO

Caput I.

De recursibus adversus actus administrativos singulares

Art. 73. § 1. Recursus referre debet:

1° a quonam ipse proponatur;

2° actum, qui impugnatur;

3° quid petatur;

4° quo iure innitatur;

5° diem acceptae notificationis actus impugnati;

6° subscriptionem partis recurrentis.

§ 2. Recursui adnecti debent:

1° actus, qui impugnatur, nisi a recurrente exhiberi nequeat;

2° mandatum Patrono rite collatum aut petitio, documentis suffulta, pro obtinendo gratuito patrocinio.

Art. 74. § 1. Recursus exhibendus est intra terminum peremptorium sexaginta dierum utilium a die peractae actus notificationis.

§ 2. Ab uno Romano Pontifice in terminos remissio conceditur.

Art. 75. Nullus est recursus si absolute incertum manet de quibusnam personis vel de quonam obiecto agatur.

Art. 76. § 1. Secretarius, audito Promotore iustitiae, decreto recursum in limine reicit qui indubie atque evidenter aliquo careat praesupposito, veluti si:

1° non agatur de re ad tribunal administrativum pertinente;

2° recurrens careat legitima persona standi in iudicio;

3° haud exstet lex, quae asseritur violata;

4° termini ad recursum proponendum elapsi sint.

§ 2. De eiusmodi decreto Secretarius Promotorem iustitiae et, si casus ferat, competentem Auctoritatem certiorem facit.

§ 3. Recurrens in ipso decreto certior fit de facultate recurrendi ad Congressum intra peremptorium terminum decem dierum ab eodem recepto.

§ 4. Decretum, quo Congressus reiectionem in limine confirmat, nulli iuris remedio est obnoxium.

Art. 77. Salvo art. 16, § 2, Secretarius praestituit terminum pro iterando recursu, si vitiis laboret, quae emendari possunt.

Art. 78. § 1. Quovis in stadio processus, liti finem imponere potest sive peremptio sive revocatio actus impugnati sive renuntiatio sive compositio pacifica.

§ 2. Compositio pacifica inter partes acta Congressus indiget probatione.

§ 3. Aliis in casibus litis finitae, Secretarius de re fert decretum, cum iis quorum interest communicandum.

Art. 79. § 1. Secretarius, suo decreto,

1° iubet notificari competenti Dicasterio omnibusque legitime coram Dicasterio intervenientibus recursum receptum eosdemque invitat ut Patronum constituant per legitimum mandatum;

2° exquirit a Dicasterio ut exemplar actus impugnati et omnia acta controversiam respicientia transmittat intra terminum triginta dierum;

3° in causa constituit Promotorem iustitiae;

4° mandat Cancellariae ut recurrenti aliisque de quibus in n. 1 incumbentia rite adimplenda indigitet.

§ 2. Congrua congruis referendo, Secretarius eodem modo procedit cum aliis interesse forte habentibus.

Art. 80. Si Dicasterium sibi Patronum non constituat, Praefectus eum ex officio nominat.

Art. 81. § 1. Actis Dicasterii receptis, Secretarius recurrentis Patrono, de re certiore facto, decreto terminum praestituit ad exhibendum memoriale, in quo clare indicentur leges, quae violatae asseruntur, recursus illustretur, compleatur vel emendetur, atque forte ad ulteriora documenta exhibenda vel expetenda.

§ 2. Termino de quo in § 1 elapso, Secretarius decreto item resistentis Patrono terminum praestituit adeo ut ipse, inspectis omnibus de quibus in § 1, memoriale exhibeat necnon forte nova documenta producat.

§ 3. Quibus praehabitis, Promotor iustitiae votum pro rei veritate promit.

Art. 82. Communicatis scripturis, Patroni intra decem dies respondere possunt; ultimus autem scribere potest Promotor iustitiae.

Art. 83. § 1. Convocato Congressu ad normam art. 40, Praefectus decernit utrum recursus admittendus sit ad disceptationem, an reiciendus quia manifeste ipse caret praesupposito vel fundamento. Quo in altero casu motiva exprimit.

§ 2. Congressus decisiones scripto partibus notificantur.

Art. 84. Salvo art. 76, § 4, contra reiectionis decretum datur recursus ad Collegium ad normam art. 42 proponendus et pertractandus.

Art. 85. § 1. Admisso recursu, Secretarius, convocatis quamprimum Patronis et Promotore iustitiae ad summariam delibationem oralem, eorundemque attentis petitionibus et responsionibus, controversiae terminos statuit, dubia concordata suo firmans decreto.

§ 2. Quod contra decretum datur recursus intra decem dies ad Praefectum, quolibet ulteriore iuris remedio remoto.

Art. 86. Summaria delibatione orali habita, Secretarius, si casus ferat, complet causae instructionem. Si quid autem partes excipiant, ipse expeditissime de re videt.

Art. 87. Post confectum causae summarium, nullum ulterius documentum a partibus produci potest, nisi aliud Praefectus statuerit et salvo art. 49.

Art. 88. § 1. Confecto causae summario, Patroni intra terminum praestitutum suum quisque restrictum conclusivum porrigunt.

§ 2. Quo termino elapso, Promotor iustitiae votum pro rei veritate exhibet.

§ 3. Patroni intra terminum decem dierum responsiones exhibere possunt; novissime Promotori iustitiae interveniendi facultas est.

Art. 89. Peractis iure peragendis, proceditur ad normam artt. 46-49.

Art. 90. Iudices, ad contentionem solvendam, in sententia immediatos et directos illegitimitatis effectus statuere possunt.

Art. 91. § 1. Adversus Collegii sententias, cauta tamen semper Supremi Tribunalis natura, tantum remedia querelae nullitatis ac petitionis restitutionis in integrum suppetunt.

§ 2. Praefectus, si casus ferat, rem statim ad Collegium Iudicum deferre potest.

Art. 92. § 1. Nisi aliud statuatur, sententiam exsecutioni mandare debet, per se vel per alium, Dicasterium, quod actum impugnatum tulerit aut probaverit.

§ 2. Quod si renuat, neglegat aut ultra congruum vel statutum tempus differat, salvo iure ad damnorum forte illatorum reparationem, parte cuius interest instante exsecutio spectat ad ipsum Supremum Tribunal, Superiore Auctoritate de re certiore facta.

Art. 93. § 1. Exsecutor debet sententiam ipsam, secundum propriam verborum significationem in textu et contextu consideratam, exsecutioni mandare.

§ 2. Quod si agatur de pecunia resarcienda, solutio fieri debet intra terminum triginta dierum a sententia notificata, nisi aliud a Supremo Tribunali cautum sit.

§ 3. Si actus illegitimitas declarata fuerit in procedendo, Auctoritas eundem actum denuo ferre potest tantummodo ad normam iuris atque iuxta modum et terminos in sententia forte determinatos.

§ 4. Si autem actus illegitimitas declarata fuerit in decernendo, Auctoritas de re denuo videre potest tantummodo ad normam iuris atque iuxta modum et terminos in sententia forte determinatos.

Art. 94. Si qua controversia de exsecutionis modo oriatur, Congressus expeditissime eandem dirimit.

Caput II.

De actus administrativi exsecutionis suspensione

Art. 95. § 1. Suspensio, vel ex toto vel ex parte, exsecutionis actus impugnati quolibet in causae statu, adductis rationibus, peti potest.

§ 2. In casibus gravioribus ipse Promotor iustitiae actus impugnati exsecutionis suspensionem proponere potest.

§ 3. Quod si quaestio de suspensione oriatur, de ea pressius quamprimum videatur.

Art. 96. § 1. Nisi iudicio Secretarii, audito Promotore iustitiae, instantia pro suspensione exsecutionis impugnatae decisionis sit in limine reicienda, Secretarius, instantia Auctoritati aliisque, quorum interest, notificata, simul terminum pro exhibendis scripturis atque definitionis diem quam citius statuit.

§ 2. Quo termino elapso Promotor iustitiae quamprimum pro rei veritate votum promit.

§ 3. Exsecutionis suspensionem Congressus concedit vel denegat intra sexaginta dies ex quo instantia pervenerit.

Art. 97. Exsecutionis suspensione decreta, quam citissime Auctoritati competenti decisio notificatur, quae statim ad effectum deducatur.

Art. 98. Contra Congressus decisionem nullum datur iuris remedium; quaestio tamen, novis quidem adductis rationibus, denuo proponi potest.

Art. 99. Nisi aliud in Congressus decreto expresse cautum fuerit, exsecutionis suspensio, causa pendente, permanet et retrorsum haud valet.

Art. 100. Quoad actiones et exceptiones de rei sequestratione et exercitii iuris inhibitione serventur, congrua congruis referendo, normae huius capitis.

Caput III.

De damnorum reparatione

Art. 101. Petitio reparationis damnorum ex actu illegitimo illatorum, de qua in art. 34, § 2, proponi potest usque ad delibationem oralem summariam.

Art. 102. Auctoritas convenitur atque eatenus respondet, quatenus ex ipsius decisionibus asserta damna obvenerint.

Art. 103. Ad nimias moras vitandas potest Praefectus vel Collegium quaestionem de damnis differre usquedum Supremum Tribunal sententiam definitivam de illegitimitate protulerit.

Caput IV.

De controversiis administrativis Supremo Tribunali delatis

Art. 104. Nisi singulis in casibus aliud Romanus Pontifex statuerit, Supremum Tribunal in controversiis administrativis sibi delatis videt de merito iuxta normas de processu contentioso administrativo necnon processus contentiosi ordinarii praescripta, congrua congruis referendo.

Caput V.

De conflictibus competentiae inter Dicasteria

Art. 105. Orto conflictu competentiae inter Dicasteria, res, iis auditis et praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae, expeditissime in Congressu dirimitur.

TITULUS V

DE ADMINISTRATIVA RATIONE PROCEDENDI

Art. 106. § 1. Nisi aliud statuatur, in negotiis, de quibus in art. 35, Praefectus, praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae et audito Secretario, decernit; Defensor vinculi insuper auditur ad normam art. 8, § 1.

§ 2. Praefectus, firmo art. 6, § 3, habitualiter Secretario mandare potest, ut, praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae, quaedam negotia ordinaria expediat.

Art. 107. § 1. De negotiis maioris momenti videtur in Congressu.

§ 2. Ad Praefectum pertinet decernere ut, praeterquam in casibus recensitis, de quaestione in Congressu disceptetur.

§ 3. Nihil grave et extraordinarium agitur, nisi Summo Pontifici fuerit antea significatum.

Art. 108. Secretarii est, praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae, recursum vel petitionem in limine reicere ob manifestum defectum praesuppositi vel fundamenti, firma facultate recurrendi ad normam art. 28, § 1.

Art. 109. Audiantur, quantum fieri potest, ii quorum iura laedi possint.

Caput I.

De rectae administrationis iustitiae invigilantia

Art. 110. § 1. Annua relatione vel sententiis tribunalis examini subiectis, Secretarius opportuna consilia vel animadversiones offert.

§ 2. Secretarii est in casu denuntiationis adversus aliquod tribunal, audito, prout casus ferat, eius Moderatore, Vicario iudiciali vel iudice causae, et praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae, decernere an et quomodo procedendum sit, salva competentia tribunalium et iudicum.

§ 3. Rem ad Praefectum defert, si quaedam graviora animadvertenda videntur.

Art. 111. § 1. De praeceptis tribunali dandis ad rectam iurisprudentiam tuendam vel modum procedendi iure praescriptum deinceps servandum, de translatione causae ad aliud tribunal, de suspensione exsecutionis decisionis

latae deque inspectione tribunalis in Congressu decernitur, si quidem graves irregularitates detectae fuerint.

§ 2. In casu urgenti, ne damnum irreparabile oriatur, suspensio exsecutionis decisionis iudicialis, praehabito voto Promotoris iustitiae vel Defensoris vinculi, a Praefecto vel Secretario iubetur, donec in Congressu de re videatur.

§ 3. Quoties ad rectam iurisprudentiam tuendam necessarium videatur, Signatura Apostolica a Summo Pontifice petere potest potestatem iudicandi etiam de merito.

Art. 112. Patrum Signaturae Apostolicae una cum Secretario est textum in Congressu paratum decreti generalis exsecutorii vel instructionis examini subicere eumque approbare, necnon quaestiones generales, rectam administrationem iustitiae respicientes, pertractare.

Caput II.

De sanctionibus disciplinaribus

Art. 113. § 1. Si in ministros alicuius tribunalis, advocatos vel procuratores animadvertendum videatur, Praefectus de more Moderatori tribunalis mandat ut de re videat, si opus sit provideat et dein referat; eius vero decisio, etiam ex officio, in Congressu revocari vel emendari potest.

§ 2. Quod si actio disciplinaris coram Signatura Apostolica instituatur, Promotor iustitiae libellum conficit et, defensione perpensa, eum confirmat vel emendat; facultate data respondendi, dein in Congressu de re videtur.

§ 3. Monitio etiam extra Congressum a Praefecto dari potest.

Caput III.

De recursibus hierarchicis

Art. 114. § 1. De recursibus hierarchicis propositis, qui ad rectam administrationem iustitiae pertinent, videtur ad normam art. 106, § 1, salvis artt. 107-109.

§ 2. Recurrens potest, rationibus allatis, intra decem dies a Praefecti decreto recepto eius revocationem vel emendationem petere.

Caput IV.

De commissionibus aliisque rescriptis

Art. 115. § 1. Accepta petitione, ut causa Rotae Romanae vel tribunali secus absolute incompetenti committatur, utque competentia tribunalis re-

lative incompetentis prorogetur vel alia gratia quoad iustitiam administrandam concedatur, proceditur ad normam art. 106, § 1, salvis artt. 107-109.

§ 2. Solummodo autem in Congressu decerni possunt concessio dispensationis a duplici decisione conformi in causis nullitatis matrimonii vel commissio causae ad Rotae Romanae Tribunalis iudicium.

§ 3. Petito beneficio novae audientiae, res ad Congressum defertur.

§ 4. Videndum est hisce in negotiis expediendis num habeatur iusta et rationabilis causa, habita ratione adiunctorum casus et gravitatis legis; ab iis vero quae processum iudicialem essentialiter constituunt dispensari nequit.

Art. 116. § 1. Nisi petitio gratiae, quae ab uno Romano Pontifice concedi potest, in limine reicienda sit, videtur in Congressu, servatis artt. 106, § 1, et 109: An SS.mo consulendum sit pro gratia.

§ 2. Si decisio fuerit negativa, Signatura Apostolica id cum eis, quorum interest, communicat.

Art. 117. Ratio agendi, de qua in art. 106, § 1, adhibetur in approbandis decretis erectionis tribunalium interdioecesanorum vel tribunalium appellationis, quando designationis approbatio Sanctae Sedi reservatur.

Caput V.
De nullitatis matrimonii declaratione

Art. 118. Quod si Signatura Apostolica videt de nullitate matrimonii declaranda in casibus, qui accuratiorem disquisitionem vel investigationem non exigant, causa, animadversionibus Defensoris vinculi et voto Promotoris iustitiae acquisitis, ad Congressum defertur.

Caput VI.
De decretis exsecutivitatis in ordine ad effectus civiles obtinendos

Art. 119. § 1. Ad Secretarium spectat, ad instantiam eius cuius interest, decretum ferre ut decisiones exsecutivae in causis nullitatis matrimonii effectus civiles obtineant apud Nationes, quae hac de re conventionem cum Sancta Sede inierunt.

§ 2. Si ad rem dubium oriatur, proceditur ad normam art. 106, § 1, salvis artt. 107-109.

§ 3. Pendente impugnatione apud forum iure competens adversus illas decisiones, decretum exsecutivitatis de more non datur.

Art. 120. § 1. Non est locus impugnationi adversus decretum exsecutivitatis.

§ 2. Praefecti vero est, salvo art. 109 et auditis Defensore vinculi, Promotore iustitiae et Secretario, idem decretum gravi de causa ex officio suspendere vel revocare.

Art. 121. In causis de dissolutione vinculi matrimonii rati et non consummati analoga proceditur ratione.

TITULUS VI

DE IURE APPLICANDO

Art. 122. Quoad ea, quae hac in lege propria non praevidentur, serventur, quatenus applicari possunt, normae processuales codiciales, ratione etiam traditionis canonicae et praxis Signaturae Apostolicae habita.

Haec itaque auctoritate Nostra comprobamus, decernimus et statuimus, contrariis rebus minime quibuslibet obsistentibus.

Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die XXI mensis Iunii, anno Domini MMVIII, Pontificatus Nostri quarto.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

HOMILIAE

I

Sydneii habita ad episcopos, presbyteros, diaconos, sacrorum alumnos, novitios et novitias in Cathedrali templo Sanctae Mariae dicato.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In this noble cathedral I rejoice to greet my brother Bishops and priests, and the deacons, religious and laity of the Archdiocese of Sydney. In a very special way, my greeting goes to the seminarians and young religious who are present among us. Like the young Israelites in today's first reading, they are a sign of hope and renewal for God's people; and, like those young Israelites, they will have the task of building up the Lord's house in the coming generation. As we admire this magnificent edifice, how can we not think of all those ranks of priests, religious and faithful laity who, each in his or her own way, contributed to the building up of the Church in Australia? Our thoughts turn in particular to those settler families to whom Father Jeremiah O'Flynn entrusted the Blessed Sacrament at his departure, a "small flock" which cherished and preserved that precious treasure, passing it on to the succeeding generations who raised this great tabernacle to the glory of God. Let us rejoice in their fidelity and perseverance, and dedicate ourselves to carrying on their labours for the spread of the Gospel, the conversion of hearts and the growth of the Church in holiness, unity and charity!

We are about to celebrate the dedication of the new altar of this venerable cathedral. As its sculpted frontal powerfully reminds us, every altar is a symbol of Jesus Christ, present in the midst of his Church as priest, altar and victim.[1] Crucified, buried and raised from the dead, given life in the Spirit and seated at the right hand of the Father, Christ has become our great high priest, eternally making intercession for us. In the Church's liturgy, and above all in the sacrifice of the Mass consummated on the altars of the world, he invites us, the members of his mystical Body, to share in his self-oblation. He calls us, as the priestly people of the new and eternal cove-

* Die 19 Iulii 2008.

[1] Cfr *Preface of Easter* V.

nant, to offer, in union with him, our own daily sacrifices for the salvation of the world.

In today's liturgy the Church reminds us that, like this altar, we too have been consecrated, set "apart" for the service of God and the building up of his Kingdom. All too often, however, we find ourselves immersed in a world that would set God "side". In the name of human freedom and autonomy, God's name is passed over in silence, religion is reduced to private devotion, and faith is shunned in the public square. At times this mentality, so completely at odds with the core of the Gospel, can even cloud our own understanding of the Church and her mission. We too can be tempted to make the life of faith a matter of mere sentiment, thus blunting its power to inspire a consistent vision of the world and a rigorous dialogue with the many other visions competing for the minds and hearts of our contemporaries.

Yet history, including the history of our own time, shows that the question of God will never be silenced, and that indifference to the religious dimension of human existence ultimately diminishes and betrays man himself. Is that not the message which is proclaimed by the magnificent architecture of this cathedral? Is that not the mystery of faith which will be proclaimed from this altar at every celebration of the Eucharist? Faith teaches us that in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, we come to understand the grandeur of our own humanity, the mystery of our life on this earth, and the sublime destiny which awaits us in heaven.[2] Faith teaches us that we are God's creatures, made in his image and likeness, endowed with an inviolable dignity, and called to eternal life. Wherever man is diminished, the world around us is also diminished; it loses its ultimate meaning and strays from its goal. What emerges is a culture, not of life, but of death. How could this be considered "progress"? It is a backward step, a form of regression which ultimately dries up the very sources of life for individuals and all of society.

We know that in the end — as Saint Ignatius of Loyola saw so clearly — the only real "standard" against which all human reality can be measured is the Cross and its message of an unmerited love which triumphs over evil, sin and death, creating new life and unfading joy. The Cross reveals that we find ourselves only by giving our lives away, receiving God's love as an unmerited

[2] Cfr *Gaudium et Spes*, 24.

gift and working to draw all men and women into the beauty of that love and the light of the truth which alone brings salvation to the world.

It is in this truth — this mystery of faith — that we have been "consecrated",[3] and it is in this truth that we are called to grow, with the help of God's grace, in daily fidelity to his word, within the life-giving communion of the Church. Yet how difficult is this path of consecration! It demands continual "conversion", a sacrificial death to self which is the condition for belonging fully to God, a change of mind and heart which brings true freedom and a new breadth of vision. Today's liturgy offers an eloquent symbol of that progressive spiritual transformation to which each of us is called. From the sprinkling of water, the proclamation of God's word and the invocation of all the saints, to the prayer of consecration, the anointing and washing of the altar, its being clothed in white and apparelled in light — all these rites invite us to re-live our own consecration in Baptism. They invite us to reject sin and its false allure, and to drink ever more deeply from the life-giving springs of God's grace.

Dear friends, may this celebration, in the presence of the Successor of Peter, be a moment of rededication and renewal for the whole Church in Australia! Here I would like to pause to acknowledge the shame which we have all felt as a result of the sexual abuse of minors by some clergy and religious in this country. Indeed, I am deeply sorry for the pain and suffering the victims have endured, and I assure them that, as their Pastor, I too share in their suffering. These misdeeds, which constitute so grave a betrayal of trust, deserve unequivocal condemnation. They have caused great pain and have damaged the Church's witness. I ask all of you to support and assist your Bishops, and to work together with them in combating this evil. Victims should receive compassion and care, and those responsible for these evils must be brought to justice. It is an urgent priority to promote a safer and more wholesome environment, especially for young people. In these days marked by the celebration of World Youth Day, we are reminded of how precious a treasure has been entrusted to us in our young people, and how great a part of the Church's mission in this country has been dedicated to their education and care. As the Church in Australia continues, in the spirit of the Gospel, to address effectively this serious pastoral challenge, I join you in

[3] Cfr *Jn* 17:17-19.

praying that this time of purification will bring about healing, reconciliation and ever greater fidelity to the moral demands of the Gospel.

I wish now to turn to the seminarians and young religious in our midst, with a special word of affection and encouragement. Dear friends: with great generosity you have set out on a particular path of consecration, grounded in your Baptism and undertaken in response to the Lord's personal call. You have committed yourselves, in different ways, to accepting Christ's invitation to follow him, to leave all behind, and to devote your lives to the pursuit of holiness and the service of his people.

In today's Gospel, the Lord calls us to "believe in the light".[4] These words have a special meaning for you, dear young seminarians and religious. They are a summons to trust in the truth of God's word and to hope firmly in his promises. They invite us to see, with the eyes of faith, the infallible working of his grace all around us, even in those dark times when all our efforts seem to be in vain. Let this altar, with its powerful image of Christ the Suffering Servant, be a constant inspiration to you. Certainly there are times when every faithful disciple will feel the heat and the burden of the day,[5] and the struggle of bearing prophetic witness before a world which can appear deaf to the demands of God's word. Do not be afraid! Believe in the light! Take to heart the truth which we have heard in today's second reading: "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and for ever".[6] The light of Easter continues to dispel the darkness!

The Lord also calls us to walk in the light.[7] Each of you has embarked on the greatest and the most glorious of all struggles, to be consecrated in truth, to grow in virtue, to achieve harmony between your thoughts and ideals, and your words and actions. Enter sincerely and deeply into the discipline and spirit of your programmes of formation. Walk in Christ's light daily through fidelity to personal and liturgical prayer, nourished by meditation on the inspired word of God. The Fathers of the Church loved to see the Scriptures as a spiritual Eden, a garden where we can walk freely with God, admiring the beauty and harmony of his saving plan as it bears fruit in our own lives, in the life of the Church and in all of history. Let prayer, then, and medita-

[4] *Jn* 12:36.
[5] Cfr *Mt* 20:12.
[6] *Heb* 13:8.
[7] Cfr *Jn* 12:35.

tion on God's word, be the lamp which illumines, purifies and guides your steps along the path which the Lord has marked out for you. Make the daily celebration of the Eucharist the centre of your life. At each Mass, when the Lord's Body and Blood are lifted up at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, lift up your own hearts and lives, through Christ, with him and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, as a loving sacrifice to God our Father.

In this way, dear young seminarians and religious, you yourselves will become living altars, where Christ's sacrificial love is made present as an inspiration and a source of spiritual nourishment to everyone you meet. By embracing the Lord's call to follow him in chastity, poverty and obedience, you have begun a journey of radical discipleship which will make you "signs of contradiction" [8] to many of your contemporaries. Model your lives daily on the Lord's own loving self-oblation in obedience to the will of the Father. You will then discover the freedom and joy which can draw others to the Love which lies beyond all other loves as their source and their ultimate fulfilment. Never forget that celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom means embracing a life completely devoted to love, a love that enables you to commit yourselves fully to God's service and to be totally present to your brothers and sisters, especially those in need. The greatest treasures that you share with other young people — your idealism, your generosity, your time and energy — these are the very sacrifices which you are placing upon the Lord's altar. May you always cherish this beautiful charism which God has given you for his glory and the building up of the Church!

Dear friends, let me conclude these reflections by drawing your attention to the great stained glass window in the chancel of this cathedral. There Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, is represented enthroned in majesty beside her divine Son. The artist has represented Mary, as the new Eve, offering an apple to Christ, the new Adam. This gesture symbolizes her reversal of our first parents' disobedience, the rich fruit which God's grace bore in her own life, and the first fruits of that redeemed and glorified humanity which she has preceded into the glory of heaven. Let us ask Mary, Help of Christians, to sustain the Church in Australia in fidelity to that grace by which the Crucified Lord even now "draws to himself" all creation and every human heart.[9]

[8] Cfr *Lk* 2:34.
[9] Cfr *Jn* 12:32.

May the power of his Holy Spirit consecrate the faithful of this land in truth, and bring forth abundant fruits of holiness and justice for the redemption of the world. May it guide all humanity into the fullness of life around that Altar, where, in the glory of the heavenly liturgy, we are called to sing God's praises for ever. Amen.

II

Sydneii in conclusione XXIII Diei Internationalis Iuventutis.*

Dear Friends,

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you".[1] We have seen this promise fulfilled! On the day of Pentecost, as we heard in the first reading, the Risen Lord, seated at the right hand of the Father, sent the Spirit upon the disciples gathered in the Upper Room. In the power of that Spirit, Peter and the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. In every age, and in every language, the Church throughout the world continues to proclaim the marvels of God and to call all nations and peoples to faith, hope and new life in Christ.

In these days I too have come, as the Successor of Saint Peter, to this magnificent land of Australia. I have come to confirm you, my young brothers and sisters, in your faith and to encourage you to open your hearts to the power of Christ's Spirit and the richness of his gifts. I pray that this great assembly, which unites young people "from every nation under heaven",[2] will be a new Upper Room. May the fire of God's love descend to fill your hearts, unite you ever more fully to the Lord and his Church, and send you forth, a new generation of apostles, to bring the world to Christ!

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you". These words of the Risen Lord have a special meaning for those young people who will be confirmed, sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, at today's Mass. But they are also addressed to each of us — to all those who have received the Spirit's gift of reconciliation and new life at Baptism, who have welcomed him into their hearts as their helper and guide at Confirmation, and who

* Die 20 Iulii 2008.

[1] *Acts* 1:8.

[2] *Acts* 2:5.

daily grow in his gifts of grace through the Holy Eucharist. At each Mass, in fact, the Holy Spirit descends anew, invoked by the solemn prayer of the Church, not only to transform our gifts of bread and wine into the Lord's body and blood, but also to transform our lives, to make us, in his power, "one body, one spirit in Christ".

But what is this "power" of the Holy Spirit? It is the power of God's life! It is the power of the same Spirit who hovered over the waters at the dawn of creation and who, in the fullness of time, raised Jesus from the dead. It is the power which points us, and our world, towards the coming of the Kingdom of God. In today's Gospel, Jesus proclaims that a new age has begun, in which the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all humanity.[3] He himself, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, came among us to bring us that Spirit. As the source of our new life in Christ, the Holy Spirit is also, in a very real way, the soul of the Church, the love which binds us to the Lord and one another, and the light which opens our eyes to see all around us the wonders of God's grace.

Here in Australia, this "great south land of the Holy Spirit", all of us have had an unforgettable experience of the Spirit's presence and power in the beauty of nature. Our eyes have been opened to see the world around us as it truly is: "charged", as the poet says, "with the grandeur of God", filled with the glory of his creative love. Here too, in this great assembly of young Christians from all over the world, we have had a vivid experience of the Spirit's presence and power in the life of the Church. We have seen the Church for what she truly is: the Body of Christ, a living community of love, embracing people of every race, nation and tongue, of every time and place, in the unity born of our faith in the Risen Lord.

The power of the Spirit never ceases to fill the Church with life! Through the grace of the Church's sacraments, that power also flows deep within us, like an underground river which nourishes our spirit and draws us ever nearer to the source of our true life, which is Christ. Saint Ignatius of Antioch, who died a martyr in Rome at the beginning of the second century, has left us a splendid description of the Spirit's power dwelling within us. He spoke of the

[3] Cfr *Lk* 4:21.

Spirit as a fountain of living water springing up within his heart and whispering: "Come, come to the Father".[4]

Yet this power, the grace of the Spirit, is not something we can merit or achieve, but only receive as pure gift. God's love can only unleash its power when it is allowed to change us from within. We have to let it break through the hard crust of our indifference, our spiritual weariness, our blind conformity to the spirit of this age. Only then can we let it ignite our imagination and shape our deepest desires. That is why prayer is so important: daily prayer, private prayer in the quiet of our hearts and before the Blessed Sacrament, and liturgical prayer in the heart of the Church. Prayer is pure receptivity to God's grace, love in action, communion with the Spirit who dwells within us, leading us, through Jesus, in the Church, to our heavenly Father. In the power of his Spirit, Jesus is always present in our hearts, quietly waiting for us to be still with him, to hear his voice, to abide in his love, and to receive "power from on high", enabling us to be salt and light for our world.

At his Ascension, the Risen Lord told his disciples: "You will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth".[5] Here, in Australia, let us thank the Lord for the gift of faith, which has come down to us like a treasure passed on from generation to generation in the communion of the Church. Here, in Oceania, let us give thanks in a special way for all those heroic missionaries, dedicated priests and religious, Christian parents and grandparents, teachers and catechists who built up the Church in these lands — witnesses like Blessed Mary MacKillop, Saint Peter Chanel, Blessed Peter To Rot, and so many others! The power of the Spirit, revealed in their lives, is still at work in the good they left behind, in the society which they shaped and which is being handed on to you.

Dear young people, let me now ask you a question. What will *you* leave to the next generation? Are you building your lives on firm foundations, building something that will endure? Are you living your lives in a way that opens up space for the Spirit in the midst of a world that wants to forget God, or even rejects him in the name of a falsely-conceived freedom? How are you using the gifts you have been given, the "power" which the Holy Spirit is

[4] Cfr *Ad Rom*, 6:1-9.
[5] *Acts* 1:8.

even now prepared to release within you? What legacy will you leave to young people yet to come? What difference will you make?

The power of the Holy Spirit does not only enlighten and console us. It also points us to the future, to the coming of God's Kingdom. What a magnificent vision of a humanity redeemed and renewed we see in the new age promised by today's Gospel! Saint Luke tells us that Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of all God's promises, the Messiah who fully possesses the Holy Spirit in order to bestow that gift upon all mankind. The outpouring of Christ's Spirit upon humanity is a pledge of hope and deliverance from everything that impoverishes us. It gives the blind new sight; it sets the downtrodden free, and it creates unity in and through diversity.[6] This power can create a new world: it can "renew the face of the earth"![7]

Empowered by the Spirit, and drawing upon faith's rich vision, a new generation of Christians is being called to help build a world in which God's gift of life is welcomed, respected and cherished — not rejected, feared as a threat and destroyed. A new age in which love is not greedy or self-seeking, but pure, faithful and genuinely free, open to others, respectful of their dignity, seeking their good, radiating joy and beauty. A new age in which hope liberates us from the shallowness, apathy and self-absorption which deaden our souls and poison our relationships. Dear young friends, the Lord is asking you to be prophets of this new age, messengers of his love, drawing people to the Father and building a future of hope for all humanity.

The world needs this renewal! In so many of our societies, side by side with material prosperity, a spiritual desert is spreading: an interior emptiness, an unnamed fear, a quiet sense of despair. How many of our contemporaries have built broken and empty cisterns[8] in a desperate search for meaning — the ultimate meaning that only love can give? This is the great and liberating gift which the Gospel brings: it reveals our dignity as men and women created in the image and likeness of God. It reveals humanity's sublime calling, which is to find fulfilment in love. It discloses the truth about man and the truth about life.

[6] Cfr *Lk* 4:18-19; *Is* 61:1-2.
[7] Cfr *Ps* 104:30.
[8] Cfr *Jer* 2:13.

The Church also needs this renewal! She needs your faith, your idealism and your generosity, so that she can always be young in the Spirit![9] In today's second reading, the Apostle Paul reminds us that each and every Christian has received a gift meant for building up the Body of Christ. The Church especially needs the gifts of young people, all young people. She needs to grow in the power of the Spirit who even now gives joy to your youth and inspires you to serve the Lord with gladness. Open your hearts to that power! I address this plea in a special way to those of you whom the Lord is calling to the priesthood and the consecrated life. Do not be afraid to say "yes" to Jesus, to find your joy in doing his will, giving yourself completely to the pursuit of holiness, and using all your talents in the service of others!

In a few moments, we will celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation. The Holy Spirit will descend upon the confirmands; they will be "sealed" with the gift of the Spirit and sent forth to be Christ's witnesses. What does it mean to receive the "seal" of the Holy Spirit? It means being indelibly marked, inalterably changed, a new creation. For those who have received this gift, nothing can ever be the same! Being "baptized" in the one Spirit[10] means being set on fire with the love of God. Being "given to drink" of the Spirit means being refreshed by the beauty of the Lord's plan for us and for the world, and becoming in turn a source of spiritual refreshment for others. Being "sealed with the Spirit" means not being afraid to stand up for Christ, letting the truth of the Gospel permeate the way we see, think and act, as we work for the triumph of the civilization of love.

As we pray for the confirmands, let us ask that the power of the Holy Spirit will revive the grace of our own Confirmation. May he pour out his gifts in abundance on all present, on this city of Sydney, on this land of Australia and on all its people! May each of us be renewed in the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgement and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of wonder and awe in God's presence!

Through the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, may this Twenty-third World Youth Day be experienced as a new Upper Room, from which all of us, burning with the fire and love of the Holy Spirit, go forth to proclaim the Risen Christ and to draw every heart to him! Amen.

[9] Cfr *Lumen Gentium*, 4.
[10] Cfr *1 Cor* 12:13.

Saluto di cuore i giovani di lingua italiana, ed estendo il mio affettuoso pensiero a quanti sono originari dell'Italia e vivono in Australia. Al termine di questa straordinaria esperienza di Chiesa, che ci ha fatto vivere una rinnovata Pentecoste, tornate a casa rinvigoriti dalla forza dello Spirito Santo. Siate testimoni di Cristo risorto, speranza dei giovani e dell'intera famiglia umana!

Chers jeunes francophones, l'Esprit Saint est la source du message de Jésus Christ et de son action salvifique. Il parle au cœur de chacun le langage qu'il comprend. La diversité des dons de l'Esprit vous fait comprendre la richesse de grâces qui est en Dieu. Puissiez-vous vous ouvrir à son souffle! Puissiez-vous permettre son action en vous et autour de vous! Vous vivrez ainsi en Dieu et vous témoignerez que le Christ est le Sauveur que le monde espère.

Auch euch, liebe junge Freunde deutscher Sprache, gilt mein herzlicher Gruß. Der Heilige Geist ist ein Geist der Gemeinschaft und wirkt Verständigung und Kommunikation. Sprecht mit anderen über eure Hoffnungen und Ideale, und sprecht von Gott und mit Gott! Glücklich ist der Mensch, der in der Liebe Gottes und in der Liebe zum Nächsten lebt. Gottes Geist führe euch auf Wegen des Friedens!

Queridos jóvenes, en Cristo se cumplen todas las promesas de salvación verdadera para la humanidad. Él tiene para cada uno de vosotros un proyecto de amor en el que se encuentra el sentido y la plenitud de la vida, y espera de todos vosotros que hagáis fructificar los dones que os ha dado, siendo sus testigos de palabra y con el propio ejemplo. No lo defraudéis.

Amados jovens de língua portuguesa, queridos amigos em Cristo! Sabeis que Jesus não vos quer sozinhos; disse Ele: « Eu rogarei ao Pai e Ele vos dará outro Consolador para estar convosco para sempre, o Espírito da verdade (...) que vós conheceis, porque habita convosco e está em vós ».[11] É verdade! Sobre vós desceu uma língua de fogo do Pentecostes: é a vossa marca de cristãos. Mas não foi para a guardardes só para vós, porque « a manifestação do Espírito é dada a cada um para proveito comum ».[12] Levai este Fogo santo a todos os cantos da terra. Nada e ninguém O poderá apagar, porque desceu do céu.

[11] *Jo* 14, 16-17.
[12] *1 Cor* 12, 7.

Tal é a vossa força, caros jovens amigos! Por isso, vivei do Espírito e para o Espírito!

Expleta eucharistica celebratione, post antiphonam "Angelus" Summus Pontifex omnibus valedixit:

Dear Friends,

"The time has come for me to say good-bye — or rather, to say *arrivederci*! I thank you all for your participation in World Youth Day 2008, here in Sydney, and I look forward to seeing you again in three years' time. World Youth Day 2011 will take place in Madrid, Spain. Until then, let us continue to pray for one another, and let us joyfully bear witness to Christ before the world. May God bless you all.

ALLOCUTIONES

I

Sydneii ad iuvenes in Internationali eorum Die.*

Dear Young People,

What a delight it is to greet you here at Barangaroo, on the shores of the magnificent Sydney harbour, with its famous bridge and Opera House. Many of you are local, from the outback or the dynamic multicultural communities of Australian cities. Others of you have come from the scattered islands of Oceania, and others still from Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. Some of you, indeed, have come from as far as I have, Europe! Wherever we are from, we are here at last in Sydney. And together we stand in our world as God's family, disciples of Christ, empowered by his Spirit to be witnesses of his love and truth for everyone!

I wish firstly to thank the Aboriginal Elders who welcomed me prior to my boarding the boat at Rose Bay. I am deeply moved to stand on your land, knowing the suffering and injustices it has borne, but aware too of the healing and hope that are now at work, rightly bringing pride to all Australian citizens. To the young indigenous — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders — and the Tokelauans, I express my thanks for your stirring welcome. Through you, I send heartfelt greetings to your peoples.

Cardinal Pell and Archbishop Wilson, I thank you for your warm words of welcome. I know that your sentiments resonate in the hearts of the young gathered here this evening, and so I thank you all. Standing before me I see a vibrant image of the universal Church. The variety of nations and cultures from which you hail shows that indeed Christ's Good News is for everyone; it has reached the ends of the earth. Yet I know too that a good number of you are still seeking a spiritual homeland. Some of you, most welcome among us, are not Catholic or Christian. Others of you perhaps hover at the edge of parish and Church life. To you I wish to offer encouragement: step forward into Christ's loving embrace; recognize the Church as your home. No one need remain on the outside, for from the day of Pentecost the Church has been one and universal.

* Die 17 Iulii 2008.

This evening I wish also to include those who are not present among us. I am thinking especially of the sick or mentally ill, young people in prison, those struggling on the margins of our societies, and those who for whatever reason feel alienated from the Church. To them I say: Jesus is close to you! Feel his healing embrace, his compassion and mercy!

Almost two thousand years ago, the Apostles, gathered in the upper room together with Mary and some faithful women, were filled with the Holy Spirit.[1] At that extraordinary moment, which gave birth to the Church, the confusion and fear that had gripped Christ's disciples were transformed into a vigorous conviction and sense of purpose. They felt impelled to speak of their encounter with the risen Jesus whom they had come to call affectionately, the Lord. In many ways, the Apostles were ordinary. None could claim to be the perfect disciple. They failed to recognize Christ,[2] felt ashamed of their own ambition,[3] and had even denied him.[4] Yet, when empowered by the Holy Spirit, they were transfixed by the truth of Christ's Gospel and inspired to proclaim it fearlessly. Emboldened, they exclaimed: repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Spirit![5] Grounded in the Apostles' teaching, in fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread and prayer,[6] the young Christian community moved forward to oppose the perversity in the culture around them,[7] to care for one another,[8] to defend their belief in Jesus in the face of hostility,[9] and to heal the sick.[10] And in obedience to Christ's own command, they set forth, bearing witness to the greatest story ever: that God has become one of us, that the divine has entered human history in order to transform it, and that we are called to immerse ourselves in Christ's saving love which triumphs over evil and death. Saint Paul, in his famous speech to the Areopagus, introduced the message in this way: "God gives everything — including life and breath — to everyone ... so that all nations might seek God and, by feeling their way towards him, succeed in finding him. In fact he is

[1] Cfr *Acts* 1:14; 2:4.
[2] Cfr *Lk* 24:13-32.
[3] Cfr *Lk* 22:24-27.
[4] Cfr *Lk* 22:54-62.
[5] Cfr *Acts* 2:37-38.
[6] Cfr *Acts* 2:42.
[7] Cfr *Acts* 2:40.
[8] Cfr *Acts* 2:44-47.
[9] Cfr *Acts* 4:33.
[10] Cfr *Acts* 5:12-16.

not far from any of us, since it is in him that we live and move and have our being".[11]

And ever since, men and women have set out to tell the same story, witnessing to Christ's truth and love, and contributing to the Church's mission. Today, we think of those pioneering Priests, Sisters and Brothers who came to these shores, and to other parts of the Pacific, from Ireland, France, Britain and elsewhere in Europe. The great majority were young — some still in their late teens — and when they bade farewell to their parents, brothers and sisters, and friends, they knew they were unlikely ever to return home. Their whole lives were a selfless Christian witness. They became the humble but tenacious builders of so much of the social and spiritual heritage which still today brings goodness, compassion and purpose to these nations. And they went on to inspire another generation. We think immediately of the faith which sustained Blessed Mary MacKillop in her sheer determination to educate especially the poor, and Blessed Peter To Rot in his steadfast resolution that community leadership must always include the Gospel. Think also of your own grandparents and parents, your first teachers in faith. They too have made countless sacrifices of time and energy, out of love for you. Supported by your parish priests and teachers, they have the task, not always easy but greatly satisfying, of guiding you towards all that is good and true, through their own witness — their teaching and living of our Christian faith.

Today, it is my turn. For some of us, it might seem like we have come to the end of the world! For people of your age, however, any flight is an exciting prospect. But for me, this one was somewhat daunting! Yet the views afforded of our planet from the air were truly wondrous. The sparkle of the Mediterranean, the grandeur of the North African desert, the lushness of Asia's forestation, the vastness of the Pacific Ocean, the horizon upon which the sun rose and set, and the majestic splendour of Australia's natural beauty which I have been able to enjoy these last couple of days; these all evoke a profound sense of awe. It is as though one catches glimpses of the Genesis creation story — light and darkness, the sun and the moon, the waters, the earth, and living creatures; all of which are "good" in God's

[11] *Acts* 17:25-28.

eyes.[12] Immersed in such beauty, who could not echo the words of the Psalmist in praise of the Creator: "how majestic is your name in all the earth?".[13]

And there is more — something hardly perceivable from the sky — men and women, made in nothing less than God's own image and likeness.[14] At the heart of the marvel of creation are you and I, the human family "crowned with glory and honour".[15] How astounding! With the Psalmist we whisper: "what is man that you are mindful of him?".[16] And drawn into silence, into a spirit of thanksgiving, into the power of holiness, we ponder.

What do we discover? Perhaps reluctantly we come to acknowledge that there are also scars which mark the surface of our earth: erosion, deforestation, the squandering of the world's mineral and ocean resources in order to fuel an insatiable consumption. Some of you come from island nations whose very existence is threatened by rising water levels; others from nations suffering the effects of devastating drought. God's wondrous creation is sometimes experienced as almost hostile to its stewards, even something dangerous. How can what is "good" appear so threatening?

And there is more. What of man, the apex of God's creation? Every day we encounter the genius of human achievement. From advances in medical sciences and the wise application of technology, to the creativity reflected in the arts, the quality and enjoyment of people's lives in many ways are steadily rising. Among yourselves there is a readiness to take up the plentiful opportunities offered to you. Some of you excel in studies, sport, music, or dance and drama, others of you have a keen sense of social justice and ethics, and many of you take up service and voluntary work. All of us, young and old, have those moments when the innate goodness of the human person — perhaps glimpsed in the gesture of a little child or an adult's readiness to forgive — fills us with profound joy and gratitude.

Yet such moments do not last. So again, we ponder. And we discover that not only the natural but also the social environment — the habitat we fashion for ourselves — has its scars; wounds indicating that something is amiss. Here too, in our personal lives and in our communities, we can encounter a

[12] Cfr *Gen* 1:1 – 2:4.
[13] *Ps* 8:1.
[14] Cfr *Gen* 1:26.
[15] *Ps* 8:5.
[16] *Ps* 8:4.

hostility, something dangerous; a poison which threatens to corrode what is good, reshape who we are, and distort the purpose for which we have been created. Examples abound, as you yourselves know. Among the more prevalent are alcohol and drug abuse, and the exaltation of violence and sexual degradation, often presented through television and the internet as entertainment. I ask myself, could anyone standing face to face with people who actually do suffer violence and sexual exploitation "explain" that these tragedies, portrayed in virtual form, are considered merely "entertainment"?

There is also something sinister which stems from the fact that freedom and tolerance are so often separated from truth. This is fuelled by the notion, widely held today, that there are no absolute truths to guide our lives. Relativism, by indiscriminately giving value to practically everything, has made "experience" all-important. Yet, experiences, detached from any consideration of what is good or true, can lead, not to genuine freedom, but to moral or intellectual confusion, to a lowering of standards, to a loss of self-respect, and even to despair.

Dear friends, life is not governed by chance; it is not random. Your very existence has been willed by God, blessed and given a purpose! [17] Life is not just a succession of events or experiences, helpful though many of them are. It is a search for the true, the good and the beautiful. It is to this end that we make our choices; it is for this that we exercise our freedom; it is in this — in truth, in goodness, and in beauty — that we find happiness and joy. Do not be fooled by those who see you as just another consumer in a market of undifferentiated possibilities, where choice itself becomes the good, novelty usurps beauty, and subjective experience displaces truth.

Christ offers more! Indeed he offers everything! Only he who is the Truth can be the Way and hence also the Life. Thus the "way" which the Apostles brought to the ends of the earth is life in Christ. This is the life of the Church. And the entrance to this life, to the Christian way, is Baptism.

This evening I wish therefore to recall briefly something of our understanding of Baptism before tomorrow considering the Holy Spirit. On the day of your Baptism, God drew you into his holiness.[18] You were adopted as a son or daughter of the Father. You were incorporated into Christ. You were

[17] Cfr *Gen* 1:28.
[18] Cfr *2 Pet* 1:4.

made a dwelling place of his Spirit.[19] Indeed, towards the conclusion of your Baptism, the priest turned to your parents and those gathered and, calling you by your name, said: "you have become a new creation".[20]

Dear friends, in your homes, schools and universities, in your places of work and recreation, remember that you are a new creation! As Christians you stand in this world knowing that God has a human face — Jesus Christ — the "way" who satisfies all human yearning, and the "life" to which we are called to bear witness, walking always in his light.[21]

The task of witness is not easy. There are many today who claim that God should be left on the sidelines, and that religion and faith, while fine for individuals, should either be excluded from the public forum altogether or included only in the pursuit of limited pragmatic goals. This secularist vision seeks to explain human life and shape society with little or no reference to the Creator. It presents itself as neutral, impartial and inclusive of everyone. But in reality, like every ideology, secularism imposes a world-view. If God is irrelevant to public life, then society will be shaped in a godless image. When God is eclipsed, our ability to recognize the natural order, purpose, and the "good" begins to wane. What was ostensibly promoted as human ingenuity soon manifests itself as folly, greed and selfish exploitation. And so we have become more and more aware of our need for humility before the delicate complexity of God's world.

But what of our social environment? Are we equally alert to the signs of turning our back on the moral structure with which God has endowed humanity?[22] Do we recognize that the innate dignity of every individual rests on his or her deepest identity — as image of the Creator — and therefore that human rights are universal, based on the natural law, and not something dependent upon negotiation or patronage, let alone compromise? And so we are led to reflect on what place the poor and the elderly, immigrants and the voiceless, have in our societies. How can it be that domestic violence torments so many mothers and children? How can it be that the most wondrous and sacred human space — the womb — has become a place of unutterable violence?

[19] Cfr *1 Cor* 6:19.
[20] *Rite of Baptism*, 99.
[21] Cfr *ibid.*, 100.
[22] Cfr *2007 World Day of Peace Message*, 8.

My dear friends, God's creation is one and it is good. The concerns for non-violence, sustainable development, justice and peace, and care for our environment are of vital importance for humanity. They cannot, however, be understood apart from a profound reflection upon the innate dignity of every human life from conception to natural death: a dignity conferred by God himself and thus inviolable. Our world has grown weary of greed, exploitation and division, of the tedium of false idols and piecemeal responses, and the pain of false promises. Our hearts and minds are yearning for a vision of life where love endures, where gifts are shared, where unity is built, where freedom finds meaning in truth, and where identity is found in respectful communion. This is the work of the Holy Spirit! This is the hope held out by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is to bear witness to this reality that you were created anew at Baptism and strengthened through the gifts of the Spirit at Confirmation. Let this be the message that you bring from Sydney to the world!

Mi rivolgo ora con affetto ai giovani di lingua italiana. Cari amici, anche questa volta avete risposto numerosi al mio invito, nonostante le difficoltà dovute alla distanza. Vi ringrazio, e voglio salutare anche i vostri coetanei che dall'Italia sono spiritualmente uniti a noi. Vi invito a vivere con grande impegno interiore queste giornate: aprite il cuore al dono dello Spirito Santo, per essere rafforzati nella fede e nella capacità di rendere testimonianza al Signore risorto. Arrivederci!

Chers jeunes francophones, poussés par le désir d'approfondir votre foi, vous êtes venus des extrémités de la terre pour vivre à Sydney l'expérience unique et communautaire d'une rencontre privilégiée avec le Seigneur. C'est l'Esprit Saint qui vous a rassemblés ici. Puisse-t-Il vous permettre d'expérimenter sa présence dans votre cœur et vous pousser à rendre témoignage avec ardeur de Jésus-Christ mort et ressuscité pour vous!

Liebe Freunde, die ihr mich in meiner Muttersprache versteht, von Herzen grüße ich euch alle. Erweist euch überall als freudige Zeugen der frohmachenden Botschaft Jesu! Sprecht mutig von eurem Glauben, auch wenn ihr zuweilen auf Widerspruch stößt und das Kreuz der Ablehnung erfährt. Der Herr, der für uns ein größeres Kreuz getragen hat, wird euch beistehen. Gott schenke euch eine gute, gesegnete Zeit hier in Australien.

Queridos jóvenes de lengua española, la misión de ser testigos del Señor en todos los lugares de la tierra es una apasionante tarea, que exige acoger su Palabra e identificarse con Él, compartiendo con los demás la alegría de haber encontrado al verdadero amigo que nunca defrauda. Que este reto agrande vuestra generosidad. Un saludo muy cordial a todos.

Queridos amigos dos vários países de língua oficial portuguesa, bem-vindos a Sidney! A todos saúdo com afecto: os de perto e os de longe. Lá, na vossa Pátria, tereis ouvido Jesus segredar-vos: « Sereis minhas testemunhas... até aos confins do mundo ».[23] A viagem mais ou menos longa que enfrentastes para chegar até aqui, à Austrália ou — de seu nome cristão completo — « Terra Austral do Espírito Santo », não deixou em vós a sensação de terdes chegado aos confins do mundo? Pois bem! É com grande alegria que o Papa vos acolhe para vos confirmar como testemunhas de Jesus, por Ele acreditadas com o dom do seu próprio Espírito.

II

Ad iuvenes in vigilia apud hippodromum loci Randwick habita.*

Dear Young People,

Once again this evening we have heard Christ's great promise — "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you". And we have heard his summons — "be my witnesses throughout the world".[1] — These were the very last words which Jesus spoke before his Ascension into heaven. How the Apostles felt upon hearing them, we can only imagine. But we do know that their deep love for Jesus, and their trust in his word, prompted them to gather and to wait; to wait not aimlessly, but together, united in prayer, with the women and Mary in the Upper Room.[2] Tonight, we do the same. Gathered before our much-travelled Cross and the icon of Mary, and under the magnificent constellation of the Southern Cross, we pray. Tonight, I am praying for you and for young people throughout the world. Be inspired by

[23] *Act* 1, 8.

* Die 19 Iulii 2008.
[1] *Acts* 1:8.
[2] Cfr *Acts* 1:14.

the example of your Patrons! Accept into your hearts and minds the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit! Recognize and believe in the power of the Spirit in your lives!

The other day we talked of the unity and harmony of God's creation and our place within it. We recalled how in the great gift of baptism we, who are made in God's image and likeness, have been reborn, we have become God's adopted children, a new creation. And so it is as children of Christ's light — symbolized by the lit candles you now hold — that we bear witness in our world to the radiance no darkness can overcome.[3]

Tonight we focus our attention on *how* to become witnesses. We need to understand the person of the Holy Spirit and his vivifying presence in our lives. This is not easy to comprehend. Indeed the variety of images found in scripture referring to the Spirit — wind, fire, breath — indicate our struggle to articulate an understanding of him. Yet we do know that it is the Holy Spirit who, though silent and unseen, gives direction and definition to our witness to Jesus Christ.

You are already well aware that our Christian witness is offered to a world which in many ways is fragile. The unity of God's creation is weakened by wounds which run particularly deep when social relations break apart, or when the human spirit is all but crushed through the exploitation and abuse of persons. Indeed, society today is being fragmented by a way of thinking that is inherently short-sighted, because it disregards the full horizon of truth — the truth about God and about us. By its nature, relativism fails to see the whole picture. It ignores the very principles which enable us to live and flourish in unity, order and harmony.

What is our response, as Christian witnesses, to a divided and fragmented world? How can we offer the hope of peace, healing and harmony to those "stations" of conflict, suffering, and tension through which you have chosen to march with this World Youth Day Cross? Unity and reconciliation cannot be achieved through our efforts alone. God has made us for one another[4] and only in God and his Church can we find the unity we seek. Yet, in the face of imperfections and disappointments — both individual and institutional — we are sometimes tempted to construct artificially a "perfect" community.

[3] Cfr *Jn* 1:5.
[4] Cfr *Gen* 2:24.

That temptation is not new. The history of the Church includes many examples of attempts to bypass or override human weaknesses or failures in order to create a perfect unity, a spiritual utopia.

Such attempts to construct unity in fact undermine it! To separate the Holy Spirit from Christ present in the Church's institutional structure would compromise the unity of the Christian community, which is precisely the Spirit's gift! It would betray the nature of the Church as the living temple of the Holy Spirit.[5] It is the Spirit, in fact, who guides the Church in the way of all truth and unifies her in communion and in the works of ministry.[6] Unfortunately the temptation to "go it alone" persists. Some today portray their local community as somehow separate from the so-called institutional Church, by speaking of the former as flexible and open to the Spirit and the latter as rigid and devoid of the Spirit.

Unity is of the essence of the Church;[7] it is a gift we must recognize and cherish. Tonight, let us pray for the resolve to nurture unity: contribute to it! resist any temptation to walk away! For it is precisely the comprehensiveness, the vast vision, of our faith — solid yet open, consistent yet dynamic, true yet constantly growing in insight — that we can offer our world. Dear young people, is it not because of your faith that friends in difficulty or seeking meaning in their lives have turned to you? Be watchful! Listen! Through the dissonance and division of our world, can you hear the concordant voice of humanity? From the forlorn child in a Darfur camp, or a troubled teenager, or an anxious parent in any suburb, or perhaps even now from the depth of your own heart, there emerges the same human cry for recognition, for belonging, for unity. Who satisfies that essential human yearning to be one, to be immersed in communion, to be built up, to be led to truth? The Holy Spirit! This is the Spirit's role: to bring Christ's work to fulfilment. Enriched with the Spirit's gifts, you will have the power to move beyond the piecemeal, the hollow utopia, the fleeting, to offer the consistency and certainty of Christian witness!

Friends, when reciting the Creed we state: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life". The "Creator Spirit" is the power of God giving life to all creation and the source of new and abundant life in Christ. The

[5] Cfr *1 Cor* 3:16.
[6] Cfr *Lumen Gentium*, 4.
[7] Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 813.

Spirit sustains the Church in union with the Lord and in fidelity to the apostolic Tradition. He inspired the Sacred Scriptures and he guides God's People into the fullness of truth.[8] In all these ways the Spirit is the "giver of life", leading us into the very heart of God. So, the more we allow the Spirit to direct us, the more perfect will be our configuration to Christ and the deeper our immersion in the life of the Triune God.

This sharing in God's nature[9] occurs in the unfolding of the everyday moments of our lives where he is always present.[10] There are times, however, when we might be tempted to seek a certain fulfilment apart from God. Jesus himself asked the Twelve: "do you also wish to go away?". Such drifting away perhaps offers the illusion of freedom. But where does it lead? To whom would we go? For in our hearts we know that it is the Lord who has "the words of eternal life".[11] To turn away from him is only a futile attempt to escape from ourselves.[12] God is with us in the reality of life, not the fantasy! It is embrace, not escape, that we seek! So the Holy Spirit gently but surely steers us back to what is real, what is lasting, what is true. It is the Spirit who leads us back into the communion of the Blessed Trinity!

The Holy Spirit has been in some ways the neglected person of the Blessed Trinity. A clear understanding of the Spirit almost seems beyond our reach. Yet, when I was a small boy, my parents, like yours, taught me the Sign of the Cross. So, I soon came to realize that there is one God in three Persons, and that the Trinity is the centre of our Christian faith and life. While I grew up to have some understanding of God the Father and the Son — the names already conveyed much — my understanding of the third person of the Trinity remained incomplete. So, as a young priest teaching theology, I decided to study the outstanding witnesses to the Spirit in the Church's history. It was on this journey that I found myself reading, among others, the great Saint Augustine.

Augustine's understanding of the Holy Spirit evolved gradually; it was a struggle. As a young man he had followed Manichaeism — one of those attempts I mentioned earlier, to create a spiritual utopia by radically separ-

[8] Cfr *Jn* 16:13.
[9] Cfr *2 Pet* 1:4.
[10] Cfr *Bar* 3:38.
[11] Cfr *Jn* 6:67-68.
[12] Cfr Saint Augustine, *Confessions* viii, 7.

ating the things of the spirit from the things of the flesh. Hence he was at first suspicious of the Christian teaching that God had become man. Yet his experience of the love of God present in the Church led him to investigate its source in the life of the Triune God. This led him to three particular insights about the Holy Spirit as the bond of unity within the Blessed Trinity: unity as communion, unity as abiding love, and unity as giving and gift. These three insights are not just theoretical. They help explain how the Spirit works. In a world where both individuals and communities often suffer from an absence of unity or cohesion, these insights help us remain attuned to the Spirit and to extend and clarify the scope of our witness.

So, with Augustine's help, let us illustrate something of the Holy Spirit's work. He noted that the two words "Holy" and "Spirit" refer to what is divine about God; in other words what is shared by the Father and the Son — their *communion*. So, if the distinguishing characteristic of the Holy Spirit is to be what is *shared* by the Father and the Son, Augustine concluded that the Spirit's particular quality is *unity*. It is a unity of lived communion: a unity of persons in a relationship of constant giving, the Father and the Son giving themselves to each other. We begin to glimpse, I think, how illuminating is this understanding of the Holy Spirit as unity, as communion. True unity could never be founded upon relationships which deny the equal dignity of other persons. Nor is unity simply the sum total of the groups through which we sometimes attempt to "define" ourselves. In fact, only in the life of communion is unity sustained and human identity fulfilled: we recognize the common need for God, we respond to the unifying presence of the Holy Spirit, and we give ourselves to one another in service.

Augustine's second insight — the Holy Spirit as abiding love — comes from his study of the First Letter of Saint John. John tells us that "God is love".[13] Augustine suggests that while these words refer to the Trinity as a whole they express a particular characteristic of the Holy Spirit. Reflecting on the lasting nature of love — "whoever abides in love remains in God and God in him" [14] — he wondered: is it love or the Holy Spirit which grants the abiding? This is the conclusion he reaches: "The Holy Spirit makes us remain in God and God in us; yet it is love that effects this. The Spirit therefore is

[13] *1 Jn* 4:16.
[14] *Ibid.*

God as love!".[15] It is a beautiful explanation: God shares himself as love in the Holy Spirit. What further understanding might we gain from this insight? Love is the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit! Ideas or voices which lack love — even if they seem sophisticated or knowledgeable — cannot be "of the Spirit". Furthermore, love has a particular trait: far from being indulgent or fickle, it has a task or purpose to fulfil: to abide. By its nature love is enduring. Again, dear friends, we catch a further glimpse of how much the Holy Spirit offers our world: love which dispels uncertainty; love which overcomes the fear of betrayal; love which carries eternity within; the true love which draws us into a unity that abides!

The third insight — the Holy Spirit as gift — Augustine derived from meditating on a Gospel passage we all know and love: Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well. Here Jesus reveals himself as the giver of the living water [16] which later is explained as the Holy Spirit.[17] The Spirit is "God's gift" [18] — the internal spring,[19] who truly satisfies our deepest thirst and leads us to the Father. From this observation Augustine concludes that God sharing himself with us as gift is the Holy Spirit.[20] Friends, again we catch a glimpse of the Trinity at work: the Holy Spirit is God eternally giving himself; like a never-ending spring he pours forth nothing less than himself. In view of this ceaseless gift, we come to see the limitations of all that perishes, the folly of the consumerist mindset. We begin to understand why the quest for novelty leaves us unsatisfied and wanting. Are we not looking for an eternal gift? The spring that will never run dry? With the Samaritan woman, let us exclaim: give me this water that I may thirst no more! [21]

Dear young people, we have seen that it is the Holy Spirit who brings about the wonderful communion of believers in Jesus Christ. True to his nature as giver and gift alike, he is even now working through you. Inspired by the insights of Saint Augustine: let *unifying love* be your measure; *abiding love* your challenge; *self-giving love* your mission!

[15] *De Trinitate*, 15, 17, 31.
[16] Cfr *Jn* 4:10.
[17] Cfr *Jn* 7:39; *1 Cor* 12:13.
[18] *Jn* 4:10.
[19] Cfr *Jn* 4:14.
[20] Cfr *De Trinitate*, 15, 18, 32.
[21] Cfr *Jn* 4:15.

Tomorrow, that same gift of the Spirit will be solemnly conferred upon our confirmation candidates. I shall pray: "give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgement and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence... and fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe". These gifts of the Spirit — each of which, as Saint Francis de Sales reminds us, is a way to participate in the one love of God — are neither prizes nor rewards. They are freely given.[22] And they require only one response on the part of the receiver: I accept! Here we sense something of the deep mystery of being Christian. What constitutes our faith is not primarily what we do but what we receive. After all, many generous people who are not Christian may well achieve far more than we do. Friends, do you accept being drawn into God's Trinitarian life? Do you accept being drawn into his communion of love?

The Spirit's gifts working within us give direction and definition to our witness. Directed to unity, the gifts of the Spirit bind us more closely to the whole Body of Christ,[23] equipping us better to build up the Church in order to serve the world.[24] They call us to active and joyful participation in the life of the Church: in parishes and ecclesial movements, in religious education classes, in university chaplaincies and other Catholic organizations. Yes, the Church must grow in unity, must be strengthened in holiness, must be rejuvenated, must be constantly renewed.[25] But according to whose standard? The Holy Spirit's! Turn to him, dear young people, and you will find the true meaning of renewal.

Tonight, gathered under the beauty of the night sky, our hearts and minds are filled with gratitude to God for the great gift of our Trinitarian faith. We recall our parents and grandparents who walked alongside us when we, as children, were taking our first steps in our pilgrim journey of faith. Now many years later, you have gathered as young adults with the Successor of Peter. I am filled with deep joy to be with you. Let us invoke the Holy Spirit: he is the artisan of God's works.[26] Let his gifts shape you! Just as the Church travels the same journey with all humanity, so too you are called to exercise the Spirit's gifts amidst the ups and downs of your daily life. Let

[22] Cfr *1 Cor* 12:11.
[23] Cfr *Lumen Gentium*, 11.
[24] Cfr *Eph* 4:13.
[25] Cfr *Lumen Gentium*, 4.
[26] Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 741.

your faith mature through your studies, work, sport, music and art. Let it be sustained by prayer and nurtured by the sacraments, and thus be a source of inspiration and help to those around you. In the end, life is not about accumulation. It is much more than success. To be truly alive is to be transformed from within, open to the energy of God's love. In accepting the power of the Holy Spirit you too can transform your families, communities and nations. Set free the gifts! Let wisdom, courage, awe and reverence be the marks of greatness!

Cari giovani italiani! Un saluto speciale a tutti voi! Custodite la fiamma che lo Spirito Santo ha acceso nei vostri cuori, perché non abbia a spegnersi, ma anzi arda sempre più e diffonda luce e calore a chi incontrerete sulla vostra strada, specialmente a quanti hanno smarrito la fede e la speranza. La Vergine Maria vegli su di voi in questa notte ed ogni giorno della vostra vita.

Chers jeunes de langue française, vous êtes venus prier ce soir l'Esprit-Saint. Sa présence silencieuse en votre cœur vous fera comprendre peu à peu le dessein de Dieu sur vous. Puisse-t-Il vous accompagner dans votre vie quotidienne et vous conduire vers une meilleure connaissance de Dieu et de votre prochain! C'est Lui qui du plus profond de votre être vous pousse vers l'unique Vérité divine et vous fait vivre authentiquement en frères.

Einen frohen Gruß richte ich an euch, liebe junge Christen aus den Ländern deutscher Sprache. Der Heilige Geist, der Botschafter der göttlichen Liebe, will in euren Herzen wohnen. Gebt ihm Raum in euch im Hören auf Gottes Wort, im Gebet und in eurer Solidarität mit den Armen und Leidenden. Bringt den Geist des Friedens und der Versöhnung zu den Menschen. Gott, von dem alles Gute kommt, vollende jedes gute Werk, das ihr zu seiner Ehre tut.

Queridos amigos, el Espíritu Santo dirige nuestros pasos para seguir a Jesucristo en el mundo de hoy, que espera de los cristianos una palabra de aliento y un testimonio de vida que inviten a mirar confiadamente hacia el futuro. Os encomiendo en mis plegarias, para que respondáis generosamente a lo que el Señor os pide y a lo que todos los hombres anhelan. Que Dios os bendiga.

Meus queridos amigos, recebei o Espírito Santo, para serdes Igreja! Igreja quer dizer todos nós unidos como um corpo que recebe o seu influxo vital de Jesus ressuscitado. Este dom é maior que os nossos corações, porque brota das entranhas da Santíssima Trindade. Fruto e condição: sentir-se parte uns dos outros, viver em comunhão. Para isso, jovens caríssimos, acolhei dentro de vós a força de vida que há em Jesus. Deixai-O entrar no vosso coração. Deixai-vos plasmar pelo Espírito Santo.

And now, as we move towards adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, in stillness and expectation, I echo to you the words spoken by Blessed Mary MacKillop when she was just twenty six years old: "Believe in the whisperings of God to your heart!". Believe in him! Believe in the power of the Spirit of Love!

NUNTIUS

Occasione Internationalis Diei Missionalis anno 2008

Cari fratelli e sorelle,

in occasione della Giornata Missionaria Mondiale, vorrei invitarvi a riflettere sull'urgenza che permane di annunciare il Vangelo anche in questo nostro tempo. Il mandato missionario continua ad essere una priorità assoluta per tutti i battezzati, chiamati ad essere «*servi e apostoli di Cristo Gesù*» in questo inizio di millennio. Il mio venerato Predecessore, il Servo di Dio Paolo VI, affermava già nell'Esortazione apostolica *Evangelii nuntiandi* che «evangelizzare è la grazia, la vocazione propria della Chiesa, la sua identità più profonda».[1] Come modello di questo impegno apostolico, mi piace indicare particolarmente san Paolo, l'Apostolo delle genti, poiché quest'anno celebriamo uno speciale giubileo a lui dedicato. È l'Anno Paolino, che ci offre l'opportunità di familiarizzare con questo insigne Apostolo, che ebbe la vocazione di proclamare il Vangelo ai Gentili, secondo quanto il Signore gli aveva preannunciato: «Va', perché io ti manderò lontano, tra i pagani».[2] Come non cogliere l'opportunità offerta da questo speciale giubileo alle Chiese locali, alle comunità cristiane e ai singoli fedeli, per propagare fino agli estremi confini del mondo l'annuncio del Vangelo, potenza di Dio per la salvezza di chiunque crede?[3]

L'umanità ha bisogno di liberazione

L'umanità ha bisogno di essere liberata e redenta. La creazione stessa — dice san Paolo — soffre e nutre la speranza di entrare nella libertà dei figli di Dio.[4] Queste parole sono vere anche nel mondo di oggi. La creazione soffre. L'umanità soffre ed attende la vera libertà, attende un mondo diverso, migliore; attende la «redenzione». E in fondo sa che questo mondo nuovo aspettato suppone un uomo nuovo, suppone dei «figli di Dio». Vediamo più da vicino la situazione del mondo di oggi. Il panorama internazionale, se da una parte presenta prospettive di promettente sviluppo economico e sociale, dal-

[1] N. 14.
[2] *At* 22, 21.
[3] *Rm* 1, 16.
[4] Cfr *Rm* 8, 19-22.

l'altra offre alla nostra attenzione alcune forti preoccupazioni per quanto concerne il futuro stesso dell'uomo. La violenza, in non pochi casi, segna le relazioni tra gli individui e i popoli; la povertà opprime milioni di abitanti; le discriminazioni e talora persino le persecuzioni per motivi razziali, culturali e religiosi, spingono tante persone a fuggire dai loro Paesi per cercare altrove rifugio e protezione; il progresso tecnologico, quando non è finalizzato alla dignità e al bene dell'uomo né ordinato ad uno sviluppo solidale, perde la sua potenzialità di fattore di speranza e rischia anzi di acuire squilibri e ingiustizie già esistenti. Esiste inoltre una costante minaccia per quanto riguarda il rapporto uomo-ambiente dovuto all'uso indiscriminato delle risorse, con ripercussioni sulla stessa salute fisica e mentale dell'essere umano. Il futuro dell'uomo è poi posto a rischio dagli attentati alla sua vita, attentati che assumono varie forme e modalità.

Dinanzi a questo scenario « sentiamo il peso dell'inquietudine, tormentati tra la speranza e l'angoscia »[5] e preoccupati ci chiediamo: che ne sarà dell'umanità e del creato? C'è speranza per il futuro, o meglio, c'è un futuro per l'umanità? E come sarà questo futuro? La risposta a questi interrogativi viene a noi credenti dal Vangelo. È Cristo il nostro futuro e, come ho scritto nella Lettera enciclica *Spe salvi*, il suo Vangelo è comunicazione che « cambia la vita », dona la speranza, spalanca la porta oscura del tempo e illumina il futuro dell'umanità e dell'universo.[6]

San Paolo aveva ben compreso che solo in Cristo l'umanità può trovare redenzione e speranza. Perciò avvertiva impellente e urgente la missione di « annunciare la promessa della vita in Cristo Gesù »,[7] « nostra speranza »,[8] perché tutte le genti potessero partecipare alla stessa eredità ed essere partecipi della promessa per mezzo del Vangelo.[9] Era cosciente che priva di Cristo, l'umanità è « senza speranza e senza Dio nel mondo[10] — senza speranza perché senza Dio ».[11] In effetti, « chi non conosce Dio, pur potendo avere molteplici speranze, in fondo è senza speranza, senza la grande speranza che sorregge tutta la vita (*Ef* 2, 12) ».[12]

[5] Cost. *Gaudium et spes*, 4.
[6] Cfr n. 2.
[7] *2 Tm* 1, 1.
[8] *1 Tm* 1, 1.
[9] Cfr *Ef* 3, 6.
[10] *Ef* 2, 12.
[11] *Spe salvi*, 3.
[12] *ivi*, 27.